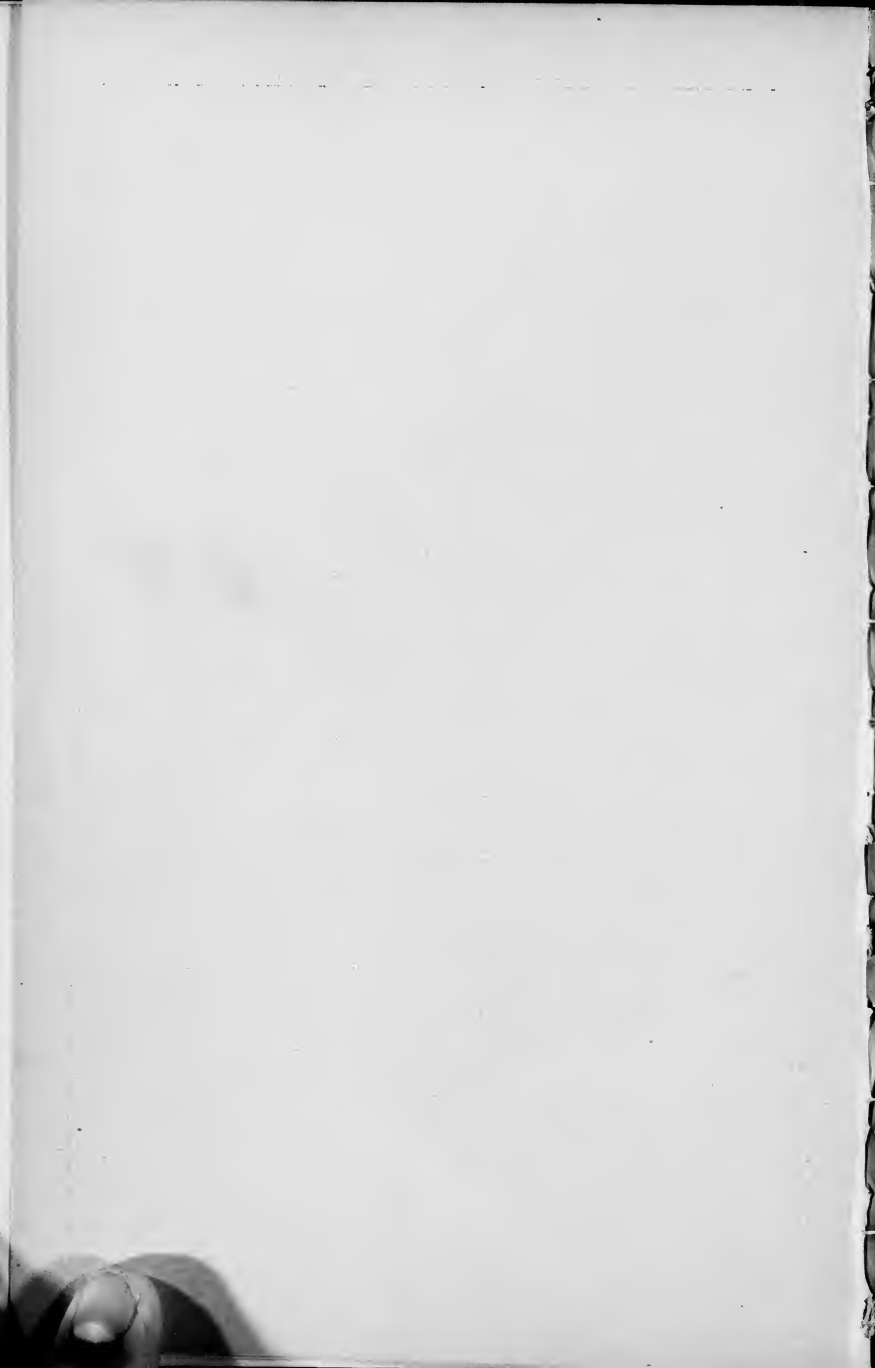


**14th Annual Report of the  
Department of Playgrounds  
District of Columbia  
1925**



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FOURTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE  
DEPARTMENT *of* PLAYGROUNDS  
OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 1925

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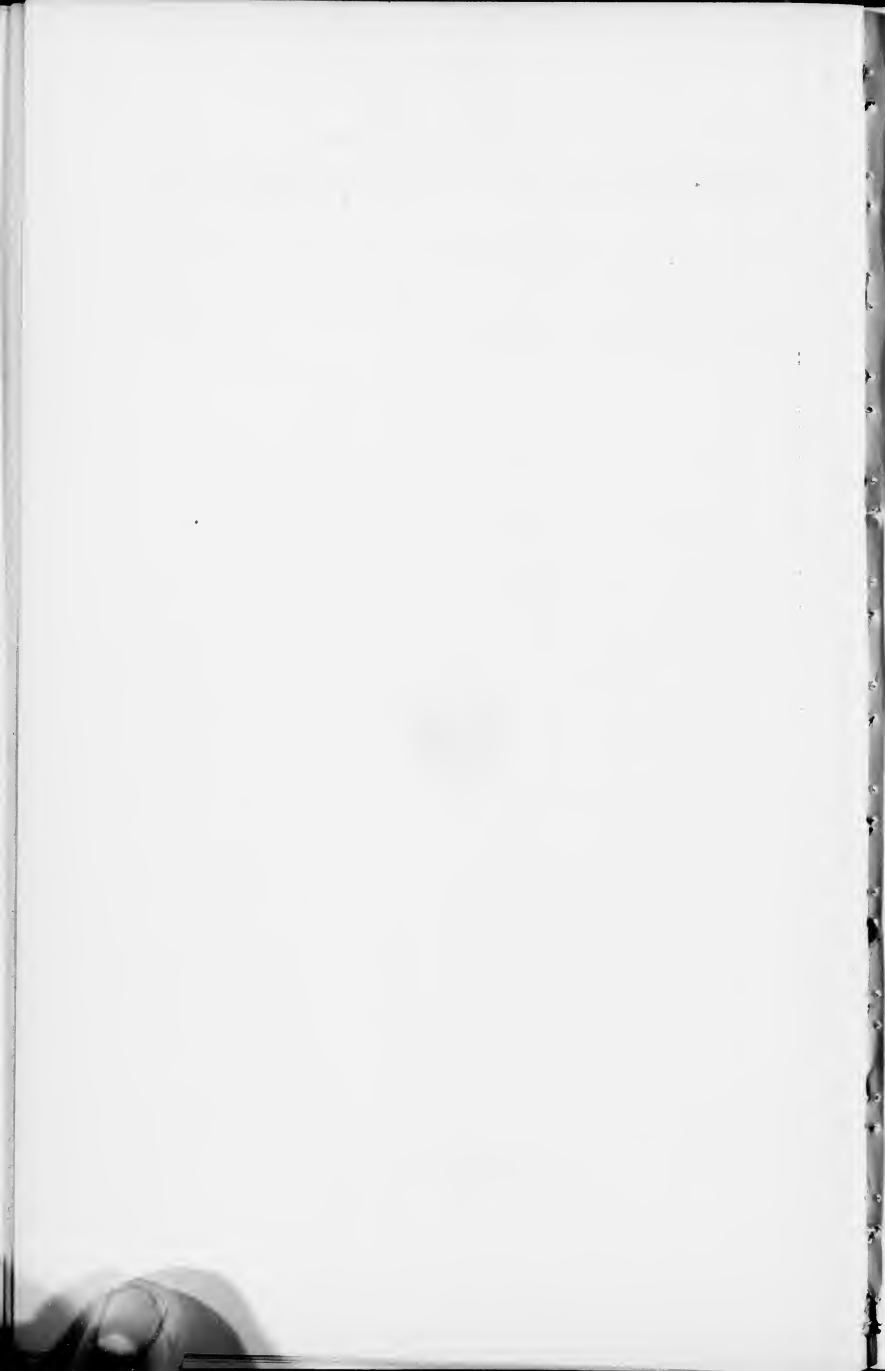
MRS. SUSIE ROOT RHODES - - - - Supervisor

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WASHINGTON  
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE  
1925



# FOURTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PLAYGROUNDS, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

WASHINGTON, D. C., *September 1, 1925.*

To the COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA:

The supervisor of playgrounds herewith presents her tenth report, which is the Fourteenth Annual Report of the Department of Playgrounds. This covers the period from July 1, 1924, to June 30, 1925.

Our playground activities can not be accurately measured. We keep count and so have certain figures, and while they are of value they tell only a fraction of the story. They show our activities in a measure only; how many tournaments, track meets, and field contests we hold, with the number of boys and girls taking part in the sports and games. They do not show the effect upon character of those taking part. They do not show how much the life span has been increased and how much greater efficiency these children have achieved nor how much happier will be their lives because of these advantages.

If a child learns more in the first six years of its life, the time when the main business of life is play, than he does in all the years that come after, it follows that when play is no longer the most vital thing it still is the one activity in which the whole child takes part, and we consider it of great importance to the child's welfare. The time is not far off, we hope, when a playground will be provided for each neighborhood as are public schools; that is, a playground for every child, not for the occasional child. The health, happiness, and well-being of the average child depends on the foresight which the city uses in providing a well organized and adequate play system.

The work in the past year on playgrounds has been especially energetic and full of spirit. In addition to the 25 municipal playgrounds already in operation, 40 school playgrounds, 5 play stations, and 2 camps were opened under the supervision of the commissioners during the summer vacation. The camps, only a little distance out, one in the Glover Park tract and one in Eureka Park at Barry farms, were used as destinations for all-day hikes and picnic parties, one playground at a time.

Our schedule of activities has become more definitely established and was better arranged this year than ever before.

The directors and play leaders met once a week for a lecture on first-aid or some playground topic, after which the special program for the week was outlined, and an hour given to activities, playing the games that were used on the playgrounds. Much interest was shown in the meetings and a spirit of comradeship developed. Through these the director of boys' activities and the director of girls' activities could better judge the ability of the play leaders,

their knowledge of the games or lack of it, and special help needed by any was more easily understood and given.

The athletics of the public elementary schools of the District were played off on municipal playgrounds as usual, where teams representing the schools in baseball, basket ball, and soccer for boys, basket ball, schlag ball, and tennis for girls, played for the division and city championships. The attendance, of course, was not obligatory, but was fostered and encouraged by many school principals. These contests were supervised by the playground directors, and all balls, bats, mitts, and athletic goods were furnished by the municipal playground department.

Each playground is supervised by a director and the larger ones have at times two or more assistants or play leaders. Our playground equipment is not very abundant, but the apparatus that we have has been selected with care and is of up-to-date type. This equipment includes sand boxes, slides, seesaws, giant strides, gymnasium frames, tennis courts, basket-ball courts, baseball diamonds, etc.

There is an ever-increasing number of adults interested in our activities. Some of the playgrounds are small and not adapted to the older boy. We have had to choose in favor of the younger boy, rather than the youth. Essential as is recreation for all, we must not crowd out the younger children; and now many must go long distances to the larger athletic fields and ball diamonds.

One of the play stations located at the Children's Hospital is especially interesting, where an instructor in occupational play has been detailed from time to time in the past and continuously this year. The estimate of this work is given to the supervisor of playgrounds by Superintendent Gibson, of the hospital:

During the year the work done by the playground teacher assigned to the Children's Hospital has been of inestimable service to the children of the District. The playroom is of very little value without the constant care and supervision, and since having experienced the value of this supervision not only for the convalescent child but for the bed patient as well, it would be a distinct step backward to be without this valuable service. Last summer our fresh-air work was done very much more effectively by a well-equipped playground in which the children indulged in games affording physical training, furnishing a closely supervised outlet for individual activities. Swings, sand piles, paper cutting, and weaving filled long hours with happiness; picnics and many other diversions can be given with some one on hand to look after them. The number one teacher reaches each day must vary, but she has become a very necessary member of the hospital staff and every child over 2 years old waits his turn to be entertained or given something to make the day interesting. The most satisfactory cooperation and consideration for the individual requirement of sick children has been obtained through the teachers assigned to this work. The playground director deserves special commendation for effective work done for both the sick and convalescent child. This playground also will be effective in handling dispensary patients during the summer months. We hope that this service may become a fixed responsibility of the District in regard to the sick, crippled, and convalescent child.

The opinion of the medical staff of the hospital may be judged through a communication from the chairman of the staff, Dr. Frank Leech:

It has come to my attention that you contemplate the removal from the Children's Hospital of the member of your department detailed there. I feel sure that you must realize the numerous benefits that a large number of children have derived who have been under her guidance.



Some of the benefits that I might mention briefly are: The convalescents are made much happier by being kept occupied; run-about children are kept out of the wards for certain periods, which is a great help to those confined in bed; the fresh air that chronic tuberculars receive; the instruction in basket weaving and well-directed play. All of the foregoing are factors in improving health and possible future delinquency. There are many other reasons with which you are familiar and which I need not mention. I trust that you will make every effort to continue the detail.

An exhibit of industrial work done by the Washington children on municipal playgrounds during the past summer was installed at the industrial exhibition of the Washington Chamber of Commerce in the Washington Auditorium March 21 to 28. More than 1,500 pieces made on the playgrounds by children from 4 to 15 years of age were shown. The exhibit comprised drawings, modeling, wood-work, basketry, sewing, crocheting, embroidery, and paper work.

A similar exhibit was put up by the playground department in cooperation with the Playground and Recreation Association of America at the convention of the International Council of Women. During the period of the convention practically all of the 400 foreign delegates saw the exhibit. There was opportunity to give information regarding playgrounds to many delegates and others who were interested. There were many commendatory remarks about the handwork done by the children from the Washington playgrounds.

We have found that if playgrounds are to be interesting to the children, adequate equipment is particularly important. The playgrounds must be made more attractive than the street. The playground differs from school in that it is not a place where the parent compels his child to go, but where the child may go if he wishes. More playgrounds and better equipment is our outstanding need, particularly for the summer months. It has been found that one-third of the fatal accidents to children are on streets and highways.

The sand box is our most popular play facility for the child from 2 to 8 years old. On every playground we have a sand box where the children lay out roads, streets, and villages. These little children love to dig and mold and tear down and build up again. Creative genius, resourcefulness in the use of materials at hand, pride in workmanship are some of the faculties developed.

Next to the sand box the slides are the most popular diversion for our children from 5 to 10 years old. The first consideration in constructing a slide is its safety.

The horizontal bar is the apparatus which largely contributes to the child's physical development. Nothing has been found better for developing good posture than "chinning."

The play station, consisting of several pieces of play equipment, flying rings, swings, and slides, is popular for groups of children wherever placed.

All sorts of relay races and jumping, either for distance or height, hold the interest of the children from 8 years to maturity.

The municipal playgrounds of the District are open for 12 months of the year; 10 months there is supervision and play leadership, organization of athletics, and industrial classes. For two months, January and February, the grounds are simply open as zones of safety. On each ground there is a caretaker for 12 months of the year and a director for 10 months. The playground department will never

reach its highest point of efficiency until year-round supervision is brought about. With only 25 directors employed for 10 months, 25 assistants for 3 months, 4 assistants for 7 months; 8 assistant directors, 3 for 3 months, 4 for 7 months, and 1 for 10 months, therefore, it taxes the ingenuity of the department to keep the grounds up to their present efficiency. In a large measure the ability of the play leader determines the usefulness of the ground.

The playground is really the melting pot where children of different conditions in life come together to have one interest. Here the success depends upon the ability to work with others. Games and the activities are merely tools to secure the fundamental results. Here wholesome play is substituted for bad forms of play. Proper use of the child's time out of regular school hours is a safeguard against temptation.

These hours we try to fill with interesting instruction and play that may develop self-respect, desire of efficiency, sense of justice, and admiration of skill; things that will help make him useful in the home and in the community.

Our three swimming pools were opened from 10 to 16 hours per day. Georgetown and Rosedale from 9 a. m. until 7 p. m., where three regular swimming classes were held daily, two for beginners and one for junior life saving. Howard, the only pool for colored people in the city, was open from 6 a. m. until 10 p. m. Here there was mixed bathing from 6 to 9 a. m., then regular swimming classes both morning and afternoon, and mixed bathing again from 6 to 10 p. m.; also this pool was open on Sunday afternoons, at the urgent request of many citizens, from 1 to 6 p. m., giving the maximum use of the pool during the heated term. Because of the extra help needed for these hours our funds were exhausted and the pools were closed on September 2. The attendance on Georgetown pool was 10,397 boys and 9,052 girls, making a total of 19,449. On Rosedale pool, 10,533 boys and 9,648 girls, making a total of 20,181. For Howard pool, boys and men, 19,599; and girls and women, 6,133, making a total of 25,732.

Our swimming pools usually open about the time school closes for the summer, but this year, June, 1925, the early heat caused much suffering. The Washington Times turned over to the District \$1,000 which was raised to enable the pools to open during June and until the new appropriation was available, July 1. This was greatly appreciated, as shown by the large number using the pools during this time.

Through the cooperation of the water, fire, and police departments, street sprinklers were installed early in June near the playgrounds which did not have either a wading pool or swimming pool. Seventeen of these helped to make on an average of 2,000 children a week more comfortable and much happier because of their chance to play in the "rain" and cool off.

During the season of 1924 the municipal pools were opened on June 19 and closed November 1. During that time a total number of 49,533 people availed themselves of the free privilege; 4,490 patronized the classes.

These free classes were very popular not only with children both large and small but also with women, and it is interesting to know

that more men entered these classes in 1924 than in any previous year. In the matter of sanitation the municipal pools have satisfactorily met the requirements of the health department.

Equipment on our grounds has been kept in repair by the construction force under the direct supervision of the inspector of playgrounds.

We have opened no new grounds. Gallinger playground was withdrawn in December and we have not secured title to the land which we are buying in the same block to replace Gallinger.

The daily schedule when school is in session is from 11.45 until dusk. On Saturdays and during the Easter and Christmas holidays the playgrounds are open from 9 a. m. until dusk. The average daily attendance during the year was 17,947.

#### *Municipal playgrounds*

##### WHITE

Bloomingtondale -----	First and Bryant Streets NW.
Chevy Chase -----	Forty-first and Livingston Streets NW.
Columbia Heights -----	Columbia Road NW, between Georgia and Sherman Avenues.
*Gallinger -----	F Street between Twenty-first and Twenty-second Streets NW.
Garfield Park -----	Second and F Streets SE.
Georgetown -----	Thirty-third Street and Volta Place NW.
Happy Hollow -----	Eighteenth Street and Kalorama Road NW.
Hoover -----	Second Street and Delaware Avenue SW.
Iowa Avenue -----	Iowa Avenue bet. Varnum and Webster Streets NW.
Mitchell Park -----	Twenty-third and S Streets NW.
Montrose Park -----	Thirtieth and R Streets NW.
New York Avenue -----	First Street and New York Avenue NW.
Park View -----	Warder and Otis Streets NW.
Phillips -----	Eighth, Ninth, Longfellow, and Madison Streets NW.
Plaza -----	Second and E Streets NE.
Rosedale -----	Seventeenth and Kramer Streets NE.
Thomson -----	Twelfth and L Streets NW.
Twin Oaks -----	Fourteenth and Taylor Streets NW.
Van Ness -----	Third and M Streets SE.
Virginia Avenue -----	Ninth and Eleventh Streets and Virginia Avenue SE.

##### COLORED

Cardozo -----	First and I Streets SW.
Howard -----	Fifth and W Streets NW.
Logan -----	Third and G Streets NE.
Rose Park -----	Twenty-seventh and O Streets NW.
Payne -----	Fifteenth and C Streets SE.
Willow Tree -----	Third, Four and One-half, B, and C Streets SW.

#### *Play stations*

##### WHITE

Lois Marshall -----	Children's Hospital
Mary Gwynn -----	Twenty-first and G Streets NW.
Jewish Foster Home -----	Q Street between Thirty-second and Thirty-third Streets.

\* Closed temporarily.

## COLORED

Warfield.....	Fifth and Bryant Streets NW.
Cook Home.....	W Street, Anacostia.

*Camps*

## WHITE AND COLORED

Glover.....	Thirty-seventh and R Streets NW.
Greenleaf.....	Eureka Park, Anacostia.

*School yards open during summer 1924*

## WHITE

Adams.....	R Street bet. Sixteenth and Seventeenth Streets NW.
Arthur.....	First and Arthur Place NW.
Bowen.....	Third and K Streets SW.
Bradley.....	Thirteenth Street and Linworth Place SW.
Brightwood Park.....	Ninth and Igraham Streets NW.
Brookland.....	Tenth and Monroe Streets NE.
Buchanan.....	Thirteenth and E Streets SE.
Burroughs.....	Eighteenth and Monroe Streets NE.
Cooke.....	Seventeenth and Euclid Streets NW.
Corcoran.....	Twenty-eighth and M Streets, NW.
Dennison.....	S Street bet. Thirteenth and Fourteenth Streets NW.
Eaton.....	Thirty-fourth and Lowell Streets NW.
Emery.....	Lincoln Road and Prospect Street NE.
Fillmore.....	Thirty-fifth and R Streets NW.
Hayes.....	Fifth and K Streets NE.
Jefferson.....	Sixth and D Streets SW.
Johnson-Powell.....	Hiatt Place and Park Road.
Ketcham.....	Fifteenth and U Streets SE.
Langdon.....	Twentieth and Franklin Streets NE.
Ludlow.....	Sixth and G Streets NE.
Orr.....	Twenty-second and Prout Streets SE.
Polk-Henry.....	Seventh and O Streets NW.
Seaton.....	Second and I Streets NW.
Takoma.....	Dahlia Street and Piney Branch Road.
Tenley.....	Wisconsin Avenue and Yoma Street NW.
Congress Heights.....	Congress Heights, D. C.
Wallach-Towers.....	Seventh and D Streets SE.
West.....	Fourteenth and Farragut Streets NW.
Wheatley.....	Twelfth and N Streets NE.

## COLORED

Birney.....	Nicholas Avenue, Anacostia.
Briggs.....	Twenty-second and E Streets NW.
Bruce.....	Kenyon Street between Georgia and Sherman Avenues NW.
Burrville.....	Burrville, D. C.
Cleveland.....	Eighth and T Streets NW.
Crummell.....	Gallaudet Street and Central Avenue NE.
Deanwood.....	Whittingham and Lane Places NE.
Giddings.....	G Street between Third and Fourth Streets SE.
Lovejoy.....	Twelfth and D Streets NE.
Magruder.....	M between Sixteenth and Seventeenth Streets NW.
Slater-Langston.....	P between North Capitol and First Streets NW.

## SUMMER BASEBALL

The department followed up its activity with the independent clubs, started in 1923 when it aided the Washington Times in its midget series, by conducting an insect league in collaboration with

the Washington Herald during the summer of 1924. Insect teams are younger and smaller than the midgets, the weight being 92 pounds. A notice was published that all boys weighing 92 pounds and under should organize teams and appear at the Plaza playground to be "weighed in" in the presence of playground officials; 485 boys, representing 30 teams, lined up to prove their eligibility at the allotted time. The 30 teams were divided into four sections and play started early in July, lasting until mid-September. The champions of each section met in a city series, which was won by the Killarney Insects, of the southeast section.

#### ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BASEBALL

Elementary school baseball, conducted by the playground department, has a total of 78 teams entered in the eight division leagues. Fourteen hundred boys played in the games.

One gratifying feature of the season just closed was the number of schools entering that had never competed in school athletics before. The most notable of these in the point of achievement was the Woodburn, which won the western section championship and lost the city title only after a hard fight. The playground divisions and the champions were Georgetown, Tenley; Garfield, Smallwood-Bowen; Rosedale, Blow; New York Avenue, Thomson; Plaza, Blair-Hayes; Virginia Avenue, Buchanan; Columbia Heights, Monroe; and Bloomingdale, Woodburn.

Blow School won the eastern section championship and played the Woodburn a three-game series for the city championship. Woodburn won the first but lost the next two games and the championship to the Blow nine. All of the games were close and interesting to the hundreds of spectators who gathered to watch the games on the Plaza field.

#### SPRING ATHLETIC MEETS

More was achieved in the way of field and track athletics on the Washington playgrounds during the year just closed than ever in the history of the department. For years the need of a regulation cinder path and athletic field has been felt by the playground officials, but not until 1925 was it found feasible to build one. It was erected on the Plaza playground and is one-quarter of a mile in length. The oval was completed in time to hold four of the school division meets and the city finals. One result noted immediately was that more boys attended the meets than ever before. Six of the school divisions are within walking distance of the new track. Because of this fact the ground was alive with children on June 13, when the city meet was held.

The division meets were keenly contested and were won by the following schools: Georgetown, Force-Adams; Garfield, Smallwood-Bowen; Rosedale, Maury; Columbia Heights, Ross; New York Avenue, Thomson; Virginia Avenue, Bryan; Bloomingdale, Brookland; Plaza, Peabody. Ross School won the city meet with 47 points. Other point scorers were: Peabody, 29; Force-Adams, 18; Thomson, 16; Monroe, 14; Cooke, 13; Carberry, 11; Maury, 8; Edmonds, 6;

Bryan, 5; Eaton, 5; Tenley, 3; Bennings, 3; Brookland, 1; and Brent-Dent, 1.

#### SOCCER BALL

New methods of teaching soccer were adopted by the playground department during the past year. A diagram of a soccer field was sent to each school with a concise set of rules. In this way the small playground force was able to teach more boys the rules of soccer than in any previous year.

The eight school division winners and the champion school of each are as follows: Georgetown, Force-Adams; Bloomingdale, Brightwood Park; Virginia Avenue, Brent-Dent; Park View, Park View; Plaza, Peabody; New York Avenue, Abbot-Twining; Garfield, Wallach, and Rosedale, Blow.

The above-named winners played in the semifinals, divided into an eastern and western section. Park View won out in the western half and Blow was the victor in the east half after playing through the semifinals series equal to any staged in Washington. The section champions, Blow and Park View, met in a city series that was originally intended to go three games, but due to three tie encounters it was necessary to play six games before Park View won the city championship.

#### TENNIS

The annual tennis tournament for boys 15 years of age and under went over in fine style. The tournaments on each ground were extremely popular and reported a large number of entrants, 1,400 taking part. The finals were between Robert Lilly, of Garfield, and Milton Baker, of Twin Oaks playground. The latter won the city championship by two straight sets.

#### COLORED PLAYGROUND MEET

An interplayground meet for the colored playgrounds was staged on August 8 at the American League Baseball Park. The colored Masonic Order permitted the playground to use part of the time, allotted to it for its field day. Three hundred boys competed in the meet, which was won by the Howard playground with 48 points. The colored Masonic order also donated medals for the boys winning a first, second, or third place. The department decided to make this event an annual feature of the summer program.

#### INTERPLAYGROUND MEET

The influence of the 1924 Olympic games had a decided effect on the local playground boys. Interest in track and field events was unprecedented and the youngsters were holding impromptu meets on all the playgrounds. The directors encouraged and helped the young athletes and finally it was decided by the officials of this department to stage an interplayground meet during the summer, an event never tried by the playground, but in keeping with its policy of supplying the popular demands of the youthful athletes. August 27 was the day and Plaza playground the scene of competition. Teams

from 40 grounds with a personnel of 1,000 boys raced and jumped for city honors that were awarded to the Cooke School by virtue of its 28 points.

#### BALTIMORE-WASHINGTON MEET

On September 6, 1924, 55 boys from Baltimore visited Washington to compete against the local playground athletes in a field and track meet. Officials of the Baltimore recreation department accompanied their team and expressed great satisfaction over the manner in which the events were handled by the Washington department. In order to allow as many boys as possible to compete each boy was limited to one event, consequently 55 youngsters from each city had the privilege of representing their town, and despite the fact that the Baltimore boys scored the largest number of points, the local boys felt well repaid for the weeks of preparation that had preceded the meet. Next year it is hoped to have one other city represented, probably Philadelphia.

#### OTHER ACTIVITIES ON COLORED GROUNDS

All branches of sports that the white grounds enjoy are promoted on colored grounds: for several reasons intra rather than inter playground sports are stressed. First, the colored playgrounds are so widely separated that the problem of transportation and the expense of the same which falls on the shoulders of the youngsters is one that has not been solved satisfactorily. Secondly, the frequenters of the colored grounds prefer to compete on their own grounds. Consequently, the interplayground meet is the only occasion when the boys are asked to go to a section of the city other than their own to compete.

The intraplayground sports have reached a high point of development and the yearly program is so arranged that competition in all popular sports is conducted.

Playgrounds that have baseball fields organized three or four team leagues that played through a regular schedule of games. Quoit tournaments were held and prizes given to the winners. Basket ball, one of the most popular sports on colored grounds, was played the year round, and leagues similar to the baseball leagues were conducted.

Volley was another popular sport, and it was not uncommon to see a game with 15 boys on a side. Roller-skating carnivals were held wherever possible and the officials of the department acted as judges of the races and fancy skating stunts. During the summer some of the youngsters were not inclined to indulge in active games in the middle of the day, so checker tournaments were arranged. At least two grounds formed glee clubs, and visitors may go on at any time and be entertained for an hour or so with songs, clog dance, and string music.

A marble tournament was held in the spring and the champions of each ground received a medal from the Daily News similar to the ones presented to the white champions.

In addition to the sports mentioned above the boys on colored grounds are given the opportunity to play soccer, tennis, foot ball,

mass games, field and track sports, and all the numerous games known to the American boy.

#### COLORED INTERCITY MEET

Athletes on the colored playgrounds were afforded the opportunity to compete against the boys of Baltimore on August 30. The Washington youngsters were carried in two trucks to the neighboring city, 48 making the trip. Both teams thoroughly enjoyed the day's activities, even the Washington representatives who were defeated 102 to 93. Officials of the two cities have planned to make the colored meets a home and home affair. Next year Baltimore team will come to Washington.

In preparation for the meet the track at Cardoza playground is being put in condition to make it compare favorably with any in the city.

The intercity games have increased the interest in playground activities on the part of the colored boys of the city.

#### TENNIS ON COLORED GROUNDS

If there be one sport that the colored playground children care for more than any other it is tennis. From opening until closing time the courts on these grounds are in demand. Naturally, a great rivalry exists as to who are the champions of each age. Tournaments were conducted on each ground near the close of the season in which every young tennis player was pitted against someone of his own age. Prizes were awarded to the successful contestants.

#### SUMMER ACTIVITIES FOR GIRLS

The activity of the department is always largely increased in July with the opening of the school yards for play purposes. With 40 of these school yards open in addition to the municipal grounds, making a total of 66 playgrounds, the department was kept busy handling the activities. Each year girls are playing a more important part in athletics and are taking an interest in sports for which heretofore they have cared little. The past summer was an unusually active one for them with track meets, tennis tournaments, athletic tests, hikes, swimming lessons, and industrial work for all playgrounds.

An interplayground tennis tournament, interplayground swimming meet, and interplayground track meet were held and proved most popular. The playground camp brought girls together from all over the city. A special teacher in tennis went from ground to ground to give instruction in form. A teacher of dancing and community singing was also appointed. Throughout the summer shows, concerts, night dances, and community parties of every description were held. These brought out large crowds and created good feeling in the neighborhoods.



## INTERPLAYGROUND TENNIS

Tennis tournaments for girls 15 years of age and under were held on municipal playgrounds during July and August, the matches being played off by teams of doubles. The champions of each ground were entitled to represent their playground in the city tournament, which began August 26. Sixteen teams competed for city honors, playing off in four sections. Montrose playground was the winner in section 1, Iowa Avenue playground in section 2, Bloomingdale in section 3, and Garfield Park playground in section 4.

In the semifinals Montrose met Iowa Avenue on Bloomingdale playground and Garfield played Bloomingdale at Plaza, the winners of these matches, Iowa Avenue and Garfield, going to finals. The final match between Flora Alderton and Mildred Vogel, of Iowa Avenue, and Frances Iglehart and Alice Brown, of Garfield, was a hard-fought contest at the beginning, but the endurance of the southeast girls over their opponents was plainly seen. They took two straight sets with the scores 6-4, 6-3. Frances Iglehart and Alice Brown won the junior championship for 1924.

## INTERPLAYGROUND TRACK MEET

An interplayground track meet for girls, the first ever staged in Washington, was held on September 11 at Plaza playground. Three hundred girls vied for city honors. The events were closely contested and winning ground was not decided until the last event was recorded, Garfield first with 30 points. Iowa Avenue came second with 29 and Rosedale third with 19. The other point scorers were Plaza, 15½; Twin Oaks, 9; New York Avenue, 6½; Bloomingdale, 6; Van Ness and Thomson, each 5; and Chevy Chase, 3.

The girls were divided into classes according to weight—85, 100, and 115 pounds. There were five events for each class, including 50 and 60 yard dashes, running broad jump, throw for distance, 200-yard relays, sack race, three-legged race, goal throwing, and tug of war.

## TRACK MEETS ON SCHOOL GROUNDS

Each school playground, white and colored, held a track meet for girls during the summer months. Competition was keen, aroused interest among the girls, and brought forth good crowds. The girls were divided into three classes, A, B, and C, ranging in age from 8 to 14 years. The following events were staged: Class A (8 to 10 years), 40-yard dash, potato race, throw for distance, balancing; Class B (10 to 12 years), 50-yard dash, running broad jump, goal throwing, three-legged race; and Class C (12 to 14 years), 50-yard dash, goal throwing, running broad jump, and throw for distance.

## ATHLETIC TESTS

Athletic tests were given the girls throughout the year. Bronze, silver, and gold buttons were awarded as symbols of efficiency in various playground activities; 313 received bronze buttons, 171 received silver buttons, and 32 received gold buttons during the past year.

Swimming tests were given by a woman swimming instructor in the Georgetown and Rosedale pools. Girls were taught to swim and then given the Red Cross beginner's test. Two hundred passed this test and were presented with the beginners' buttons. Eighty-two became proficient in swimming, took the Red Cross examination and received the swimmers' buttons. Twenty-two passed the junior life-saving test and were awarded the Red Cross emblem.

## INDUSTRIAL EXHIBITS

Exhibits of handwork were held on all playgrounds at the close of the summer season. The children were taught during the warm hours of the day to make baskets, knit sweaters, embroider towels, centerpieces, scarfs, and various other articles; to sew clothes for themselves and younger sisters; to weave rugs and make many useful things. A special day was given over to the showing of these numerous pieces of work, parents, social workers, and teachers in the neighborhood being invited to see the exhibits. The children were then given their own articles to carry home as their cherished possessions.

## FALL ACTIVITIES FOR GIRLS

The cooler days of autumn is the time of our more vigorous sports and games. Basket ball is the most popular activity at this season. There are eight leagues representing the elementary public schools, and these games are conducted on the playgrounds after school hours. The interplayground league games take place on Saturdays. The smaller grounds have leagues in dodge ball, Newcomb ball, and many other games that are popular to that type of ground.

Hikes are frequently taken on Saturdays, marshmallow toasts are held, Halloween parties given, and Christmas celebrated with community trees and Christmas carol singing. One playground had an outdoor community tree combined with a pageant, where young and old gathered around the tree and sang the old familiar Christmas carols.

## ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BASKET BALL

The elementary school basket ball series had teams from 63 schools with 906 girls playing during the series. There were 135 games played from October 14 to December 5. The winning team in each of the eight playground divisions was presented with a trophy to be kept for one year or until won three years in succession, when the school becomes the proud owner of it.

This form of sport is unexcelled for the girls, as all the games are played out of doors, giving them that freedom of movement that only outdoor sports can. The department has found that these

games help the girl in many ways. Champions of each playground division are as follows: Bloomingdale, Langdon; Columbia Heights, Monroe; Garfield Park, Van Ness; Georgetown, Jackson; New York Avenue, Twining; Plaza, Peabody; Rosedale, Pierce; and Virginia Avenue, Buchanan.

#### INTERPLAYGROUND BASKET BALL

The second year of the interplayground basket ball league proved even more successful than the first. Fifteen teams, composed of girls 16 years of age and under, were entered in the series, the games being played off in three sections with five teams in each. Georgetown playground was the winner in section A, Iowa Avenue in section B, and Rosedale in section C. These three teams then met on the Plaza playground to battle for the city championship. Iowa Avenue defeated Georgetown in the first game, then Georgetown bowed to Rosedale in the next one. Iowa Avenue and Rosedale met in the final contest on December 18, the former winning by a score of 19 to 9. This is the second year Iowa Avenue has captured the city playground basket ball title.

#### SPRING ACTIVITIES FOR GIRLS

From the 1st of March, when the playgrounds opened for the spring work, until school closed and the summer program began, the spring activities for girls did not slacken. With favorable weather conditions there were very few postponed games, either in the public-school leagues or the minor leagues. Schlag-ball leagues were formed on all grounds, quoit tournaments were held, and an open match tennis tournament was conducted during May and June. These matches were played on Saturdays and created very wide interest. May Day pageants were given, the same program being carried out on all grounds. The girls also took part in the health pageant held on the Ellipse May 1 in recognition of child health day. The playground department's part in this was a Maypole dance.

#### ELEMENTARY-SCHOOL SCHLAG BALL

Schlag ball is rapidly increasing in popularity among the girls. In the spring it is used as the competitive game for the elementary-school series. Leagues were formed and played off on the eighth division grounds that handle the public-school athletics.

Sixty-six schools were represented in the series last spring with 1,380 girls playing on the teams. The department presented the winning school in each division with a silver cup, which it keeps for one year. Langdon School in the Bloomingdale division became the permanent possessor of the trophy, having been the champion school for three consecutive years. The winning school in each division was as follows: Bloomingdale, Langdon; Columbia Heights, Park View; Garfield Park, Van Ness; Georgetown, Curtis-Hyde; New York Avenue, Gales-Blake; Plaza, Carbery; Rosedale, Blow; Virginia Avenue, Lenox.

## GIRLS' ACTIVITIES ON COLORED GROUNDS

The girls on colored playgrounds are taking more interest from year to year in sports of all kinds. In the spring they are taught to play tennis and instructed in better form, in preparation for the tournament in the summer. Schlag ball is the favorite game and each ground has a league. Three of the playgrounds handle the public school athletics. The competitive play has helped in these sections immensely and has taught loyalty and instilled a better spirit of play. In the schlag ball series, Phillips School was the champion of the Rose Park division, Logan of the Logan division, and Wilson of the Howard division.

The daily program is the same as the one used on the other grounds. In the summer there are industrial classes, special feature days with doll shows, contests of various kinds, exhibits, hikes, classes in swimming, tournaments, and many other events which make the hours spent on the playgrounds interesting. A great number of girls won either the bronze, silver, or gold button in the athletic efficiency test during the year just past.

Basketball has been a difficult game for the girls to learn, but through the efforts of the directors last fall the girls showed marked improvement in their play. Howard and Logan playgrounds conducted the elementary school series, Wilson School winning the trophy at Howard playgrounds and Logan School at Logan playground.

## MARBLE TOURNAMENT

The municipal playgrounds again conducted the marble tournament, which was a branch of the national one conducted by the Scripps-Howard news service. Twenty-five hundred boys took part in the tournament, an increase of 500 over 1924. An encouraging feature of this year's games was the interest shown by the parents of the contestants.

After a champion of each ground was picked the grounds were divided in four sections and the semifinals were held. Representatives of the Chevy Chase, Twin Oaks, Georgetown, and Rosedale playgrounds qualified for the final match, which was played on Plaza playground May 23. The championship match was witnessed by the heads of several of the District departments and many leading citizens of the city. Music was furnished by the Marine Band. Galt Davis, Georgetown representative, won the championship. He received a silver loving cup awarded by Julius Peyser, local attorney and member of the board of education, a gold medal awarded by the Daily News, and a trip to Atlantic City as the guest of the Scripps-Howard service, of which the Washington Daily News is a branch. Boys from 64 cities competed in Atlantic City, and while our champion was not among the winners, he did play a steady game and was a credit to the city.

Many prizes were awarded the champions and runners-up on each ground. Heading the list was the annual banquet given the champions by the late Gus Bucholz, hotel proprietor. The playground champions were the guests of the management of Keith's Theater and received bronze medals from the Daily News. The boys who

were second and third on each playground were taken to Glen Echo and given passes on all the amusements. The runner-up on each ground also received two passes to the Crandall Theater.

#### OUTDOOR KINDERGARTENS

Weather permitting, outdoor kindergarten classes are held daily. There is much enjoyment for the child during the kindergarten hour and work is accomplished that would not be if he were confined indoors. He feels the freedom of the open air, learns to concentrate, and to use his hands for useful purposes; to be unselfish and to take notice of his fellow playmates. The work is varied each day and the children learn different types, as crayoning, cut-outs, card sewing, clay modeling, paper folding, painting, and the construction of paper furniture, houses, etc. The class is usually opened with a song, finger play, or a suitable story. On anniversaries of national interest appropriate exercises are held and the completed handwork in some way conveys the meaning of the day.

#### THE REPAIR AND CONSTRUCTION DEPARTMENT

The repair and construction department is under the direct supervision of the inspector, who is responsible to the supervisor of playgrounds for the purchase of supplies and equipment and the condition of all grounds. During the year this division has kept the playgrounds in proper condition, has distributed supplies and equipment, has periodically inspected all apparatus and passed on its safety, has manufactured small playground apparatus, and has provided for the housing and safe-keeping of all playground stores and supplies. Baseball diamonds, soccer courts, basketball courts and tennis courts were laid out, and new pieces of apparatus installed. The largest piece of work was the construction of an athletic field and running track which was completed in time for the elementary track meet held by the department. In January and February and during the year when the weather did not permit of outdoor work, 500 pieces of small apparatus were made; kindergarten tables, benches, bean-bag boards, bulletin boards, walking beams, jumping standards, checker boards, seesaws, and baby chair swings. As a result of this work the grounds opened in March fully equipped with these articles and in July the department was ready to open the school grounds used during the summer with playground tables and benches and small apparatus necessary on the grounds. The construction force varied during the year from 6 to 15 men, who were kept busy not only with grading the grounds and setting apparatus but in making general repairs necessary to worn apparatus. Worn basketballs, footballs, volley balls, soccer balls, and baseballs are also returned to the storehouse, mended and used again on the grounds.

#### REPORT OF THE BATHING BEACH AND SWIMMING POOLS

Under the direction of Mr. F. J. Brunner, superintendent, the municipal bathing pools were opened for the season of 1924 on June 19 and closed November 1. During that time a total of 49,533

availed themselves of the free privilege; 4,490 patronized the classes. These classes are always popular with the children, also women have been interested in taking instruction, and this season more men were in the classes than in any former season. In addition to elementary swimming there were classes in lifesaving. The pools were open from 6 a. m. to 6 p. m. From the opening until 9 a. m. there was mixed bathing and from 9 to 6 on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays for girls and women, and Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays for boys and men. The monthly attendance shows that July is the most popular month at the pools. In June there were 9,152 in attendance; in July, 22,473; in August, 17,200; and in September and October, 708, making a total of 49,533. The July class of girls numbered 2,012 and boys 472. August classes of girls, 1,533 and boys 453, making a total of 4,490.

#### PLAYGROUND SWIMMING POOLS

Pools are located on the following playgrounds: Georgetown, Rosedale, and Howard. In charge of each is a life guard and a teacher of swimming, an attendant, and a key boy. Each pool will accommodate 100 bathers at a time. The pools are of the open-air type, 28 feet wide and 75 feet long, with sloping depth of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  feet to  $6\frac{1}{2}$  feet. Each pool holds 96,000 gallons of water, which is supplied from the city main. The water is filtered, and the pools are constructed in such a way that an overflow of water is always going off while the pools are in use. Every night the pools are emptied and the sides and floor scrubbed and disinfected according to instructions issued by the health department.

These pools were opened to the public June 23 and closed September 2. There were three regular swimming classes daily for beginners and one for junior life-saving. Swimming meets were held during the summer on each of the playground pools. Late in August there was an interplayground meet for girls between Georgetown and Rosedale, the latter winning, 42 to 21. The events were plunge for distance, crawl, side stroke, undressing in the water, back stroke, breast stroke, and ball race.

The Howard swimming pool was popular this year, and by keeping it open 16 hours a day gave opportunity for many who otherwise would have been denied the privilege of swimming, as Howard is the only swimming pool in the city for colored. Howard pool furnished much good sport for the boys and girls of Washington; swimming races, water polo, and water tag were popular; classes in swimming, fancy diving, and life-saving were regularly taught.

#### CONCLUSIONS

There is no factor more potent in determining the character of the future citizen than play. The greatest lessons in life may be learned—obedience, cooperation, team-work, respect for the rights of others, all desirable qualities in the coming citizen.

It has been found that little children will not go more than one-fourth of a mile to a playground while children from 6 to 8 will go one-half of a mile. Older children, of course, go much farther to

their athletic fields. With 25 municipal playgrounds and 40 school playgrounds in operation, there are yet sections where there is no supervised play.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Washington playgrounds be open 12 months of the year with supervision.

That school grounds open during the summer vacation be kept open daily after school during the school term.

That in the opening of new subdivisions in the city, one tenth of the ground, exclusive of streets, be set aside as play grounds.

That every playground be provided with a wading pool and the larger grounds with a swimming pool.

That every playground be provided with a field house large enough for indoor recreation in extreme hot or cold weather.

That public-spirited citizens be reminded that there is no gift that can be made to the city of greater use and enjoyment, with more lasting honor to the donor, than the gift of land for a public playground.

In submitting this report I desire to acknowledge the cordial support of the department of health, the splendid cooperation of the police department, the courtesy extended by the department of public buildings and grounds, the interest taken in our work by the community, the help given us by many who have rendered willing service, and my appreciation of the enthusiastic and earnest efforts of the directors of playgrounds. To the newspapers of the District I am grateful for the space in which to bring our plans and achievements before the public.

Respectfully submitted.

SUSIE ROOT RHODES,  
*Supervisor of Playgrounds.*



